

APPROVED: Meeting No. 19-91

ATTEST: *Sharon H. Gran*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 15-91

April 29, 1991

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Boards and Commissions Room, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on April 29, 1991, at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Viola D. Hovsepian (Mayor Pro Tem)

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

Councilmember David Robbins

ABSENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan (Sick Leave)

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer, Assistant City Manager Rick Kuckkahn and City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: Worksession with Traffic and
Transportation Commission

Commission members John Borden, Dennis Cain, Louis Fuerst, Stanley Klein, Alan Levine, William Meyer and Richard Resnick discussed the following issues with the Mayor Pro Tem and Council:

Neighborhood Traffic Control

o **West End Traffic Management Advisory Group.** Dennis Cain advised that this group has met three times and has formed four subcommittees: Traffic Diversion; Trucks and Arterials; Pedestrian/Bikeways; and Speeding/Enforcement.

Councilmember Coyle indicated that the Mayor and Council are awaiting recommendations on pedestrian safety citywide.

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o **North Farm.** Richard Resnick stated that, with the opening of Tower Oaks Boulevard, the traffic configuration in North Farm has changed substantially. Although built as a secondary road, Green Pasture Drive has become a primary access road. The Traffic Engineer has met with the community to explore alternatives in order to return the traffic pattern to its earlier configuration. The basic conclusion reached is to put a "Do Not Enter" sign at Farm Haven Drive and Green Pasture Drive. If the "Do Not Enter" sign does not work, then a choke will be built.

Councilmember Marrinan inquired as to how a decision is made on a neighborhood's traffic problem and if those residents affected or the whole community vote on the issue. Commission members responded that, consistent with City precedent, only affected homeowners would currently be allowed a vote.

o **Watts Branch Parkway.** In an attempt to respond to concerns of speeding on this road, Alan Levine advised that an area of Watts Branch Parkway was selected to test non-signalized devices as a way to slow traffic. There has been a considerable amount of community input in this process and the meeting attendees have been very positive. The only negative feedback has been received from homeowners directly adjacent to the location of the speed deterrents. This August, a traffic circle will be established on Watts Branch Parkway and discussion followed as to the exact location of the circle.

o **Development of Policies.** John Borden stated that there is no policy in place for dealing with traffic issues in a consistent manner throughout City neighborhoods. The Commission is forming guidelines for developing neighborhood traffic management plans involving three issues:

1. formation of working groups for developing plans and channels for communication back to the neighborhood;
2. method of achieving consensus in neighborhood; and
3. implementation of recommended actions and follow-up to determine effectiveness of plan.

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The Commission is very interested in receiving input from the Mayor and Council, and a draft copy of the guidelines will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council for review.

Pedestrian Programs and Policies

Bill Meyer noted that there is already information available for Mayor and Council review; however, concern has been expressed that the issue of pedestrian safety is not being adequately addressed. Councilmember Coyle commented that it was his idea to request the formation of a Pedestrian Safety Committee because he was under the impression that only the critical intersections were being reviewed.

Councilmember Hovsepien raised the issue of erection of "Stop for Pedestrians in Crosswalk" signs. The Traffic Engineer responded that the City has erected a few of these signs; however, in addition to the traffic signal and other posted signs, this can be overwhelming.

The City Manager commented that the issue of pedestrian safety is more than adequately covered within the Traffic and Transportation Commission and that it is important to keep this issue centralized.

Annual Budget/CIP Review

Bill Meyer stated that the Commission has prepared a "wish list" for small projects not included in the transportation section of the CIP. Councilmember Coyle requested that the Commission send a memo to the Mayor and Council with their recommendations.

Some inconsistencies in the CIP and operating budget were pointed out, and staff is following up.

Meeting with Planning Commission

Although the Commission is supposed to provide information to the Planning Commission on traffic issues, Mr. Meyer reported that they have had difficulty arranging a meeting with the Planning Commission.

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Re-establishing City's Presence in Ride-On and Metro Affairs

It was pointed out by Mr. Klein that this is one of the adopted Goals of the City of Rockville. Prior to the mid-80's, the City did work closely with Ride-On and Metro, but apparently there was a subsequent shift in staff priorities. Therefore, it was recommended that this liaison become a part of the current City work plan.

Traffic Signal at Montrose/Farm Haven

Despite the community's expectation that this traffic signal would be installed following construction of Tower Oaks Boulevard, the County has indicated that the signal is not justified by technical or safety considerations. Staff was requested to pursue this issue again with the new administration. The City Manager noted that he will follow-up with the County's Transportation Director.

Bicycle Plan

The final report on the Bicycle Plan was never adopted by the City Council. The Commission suggested bringing it back for Mayor and Council review. In its revision of the City's Master Plan, Community Development is attempting to work a bikeway system into the Plan.

Councilmember Coyle stated that it is the City's intention to incorporate the Bicycle Plan as part of the Master Plan.

Other

Councilmember Coyle referenced the County's proposed cutbacks on school crossing guards where the City has traffic signals. He requested that the Commission review this issue.

Councilmember Marrinan commented on the training of senior citizens as traffic control individuals, and the City Manager responded that this is currently under staff review and has not yet been referred to the Commission as there are cost implications to be worked out.

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Re: Worksession with Advisory
Commission on Public Education

Robert Ekman, Chairperson, and Commission member, Izione Silva, discussed the following issues with the Mayor Pro Tem and Council:

Education Lecture Series

The purpose of the lecture series is to generate interest and stimulate discussion of timely education issues. Three topics have been identified: minority achievement; assessment (schools, students, teachers); and school to labor transition. Councilmember Hovsepien indicated that another view of minority achievement is minorities at the poverty level, possibly tracking the achievement of those students who begin in programs such as Head Start.

It is hoped that a pilot presentation can be arranged for early June. In order to stimulate interest, the primary focus has been on the selection of speakers. Secretary of Education Alexander was requested to speak, but, unfortunately, was unavailable. Commission members are in contact with a couple of national organizations, and the issue of payment of an honorarium was discussed as well as whether the City has a policy for reimbursing speakers for expenses such as mileage and child care. Staff will follow up on this issue. The Commission has also been working on an application for a grant from the Montgomery County Council on the Humanities; however, it is difficult to conform the proposed lecture series to the criteria established for the grant. It was suggested that the Chamber of Commerce be requested to co-sponsor these lectures.

Other issues discussed were different formats for the lecture series, possible reception for speakers and development of a mechanism for feedback from attendees to use as a guide for the next series.

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The Commission was not successful in bringing their Career Internships Program with the Chamber of Commerce to fruition. It was agreed that this should be explored again at a later time.

A proposal for a senior essay program was discussed which will be reviewed in conjunction with the City's current Student Government Days program.

Councilmember Hovsepian suggested that the Commission may wish to take on as a project the tracking of activities at Rockville schools, in particular scholastic achievement, so that the Mayor and Council may recognize these students. She suggested that the Commission could be put on the mailing lists for the newsletters from Rockville schools.

Overall, the Commission feels that the public schools in Rockville are functioning well. They have been receiving a great deal of input from Mary Helen Smith of the Area 2 Office. It was also mentioned that perhaps the City could provide financial assistance in areas such as field trips given the Board of Education's fiscal constraints. The City Manager responded that this is not the time for the City to be expanding given its "hold the line" budget mode.

Councilmember Coyle mentioned his proposal that the Chamber of Commerce serve as a clearinghouse for jobs in the City and Montgomery County to attract Rockville high school students back to the area upon completion of college.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m., to convene again in Worksession at 7:00 p.m. on May 1, 1991, or at the call of the Mayor.